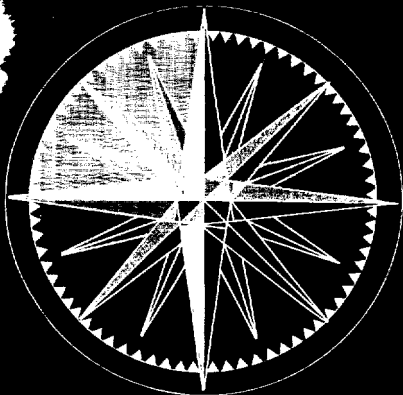


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SPECIAL REPORT

EXILE ACTIVITY AGAINST LEOPOLDVILLE GOVERNMENT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

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MORI/CDF Pages 1-5

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22 May 1964

EXILE ACTIVITY AGAINST LEOPOLDVILLE GOVERNMENT

The regime of Premier Cyrille Adoula in Leopoldville has many political opponents, and among the most active is a group of leftist-oriented exiles based just across the Congo River in Brazzaville. This group, which calls itself the Committee of National Liberation (CNL), has in recent months made some contacts with representatives of Communist countries, has solicited support from the Brazzaville and other African regimes, and has sought to establish operations back in the Congo. Despite some successes, however, the CNL is weak, disorganized, and ineffectual. Its troublemaking potential depends on forming alliances with other anti-Adoula groups--all of which have as their primary asset the Congolese political structure.

Organization

For all its noise and notoriety in Congolese political circles, the CNL is composed of only 150-250 members. It was formed last September--shortly after the Leopoldville Parliament was dismissed--by followers of the late premier Patrice Lumumba and the imprisoned Antoine Gizenga. From their Brazzaville headquarters the exiles proclaimed their intention to overthrow Adoula's government.

These charter members, led by Christopher Gbenye, still provide the core of the CNL. Loosely attached to the group are some 35 students recently returned from Moscow and a miscellany of army deserters and other malcontents.

The CNL's brief life has been marked by internal squabbling and by efforts to gain a firmer base. Last February some of its members denounced Gbenye

and declared themselves the "real" CNL, but Gbenye apparently retains the allegiance of at least some members of the organization.

The CNL has opened a branch in Bujumbura, the capital of Burundi on the Congo's eastern flank, but the head of this operation seems to act largely on his own. Even within that tiny group numbering no more than 10, internecine squabbling is endemic.

African Support

The Brazzaville regime thus far has given CNL members little more than food and shelter even though some of its left-leaning elements, especially the security chief, have befriended the exiles from the start. These elements probably are inhibited from providing more extensive support by the attitude of the moderates within the government, who want to ship the CNL elsewhere.

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his position is none too secure either, he reportedly hesitates to intern the exiles or curb their activities. He has ignored a recent appeal from Leopoldville to curtail the CNL.

Rwanda, on the other hand, has been arresting CNL adherents who come into its territory. Its cooperation with Adoula is to some degree a product of its intense hatred for neighboring Burundi.

Other countries bordering the Congo do not seem to be officially involved.

Communist Ties

The CNL's appeals for Soviet aid apparently went unheeded.

25X1 [redacted] revealed the USSR's hesitation about extending any sizable assistance at this time.

The Chinese Communists appear cautious, too. They are probably put off by the organization's petty feuding and lack of demonstrated effectiveness. Several reports that they have already given the CNL substantial assistance originate from CNL sources of doubtful reliability.

However, the Chinese--whose diplomatic representation in Africa is still sparse--do have embassies in both Brazzaville and Bujumbura which are known to be in contact with CNL leaders. Peiping--and Moscow as well--presumably is assessing the CNL's future potential. It probably wants to be ready to step in quickly with an offer of substantial aid if the CNL shows any real capability.

Activities Inside the Congo

So far, the CNL has formed only a few links with the many antiregime groups inside the Congo. Last fall, when the Kwilu rebellion was germinating, Gbenye showed distrust of the rebels' leader, Pierre Mulele, and apparently failed to heed later appeals for aid. CNL agents have been active in the troubled Kivu area in eastern Congo, probably with antigovernment propaganda. There is no evidence that CNL machinations have contributed to lesser troubles elsewhere.

Indeed, the CNL's resources are so meager that it is in no position to help others. Its arms supplies appear extremely limited. Four CNL groups picked up in the Congo early this spring--allegedly bent on assassinating top Congolese leaders--had no sidearms; a few men carried grenades. Explosions that occurred near Leopoldville in mid-May were probably the work of CNL agents who had been reported entering the Congo earlier in the month. They evidently used plastic devices.

The CNL's Potential

The National Liberation Committee as now constituted poses little threat to Adoula's government. Nevertheless, his control over the country is so tenuous that the various dissident movements even now represent a major problem for his regime. Should the dissidents receive supplies from abroad and some unifying direction, they could quickly bring about an upheaval which the Adoula regime would be powerless to control. The CNL with its foreign base, foreign contacts, and flair for political propaganda could in certain circumstances play a key role in such a development. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM)

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